

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2479

To authorize a study by the National Academy of Sciences on the migration of plutonium underground at the Nevada Test Site.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 16, 1997

Mr. ENSIGN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on National Security, and in addition to the Committee on Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To authorize a study by the National Academy of Sciences on the migration of plutonium underground at the Nevada Test Site.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress finds that—

5 (1) plutonium is a potentially deadly, cancer
6 causing element;

7 (2) plutonium has a half-life of 24,000 years;

1 (3) recent scientific studies have shown that
2 plutonium has migrated nearly a mile through
3 ground layers at the Nevada Test Site;

4 (4) Congress is currently debating placing over
5 77,000 tons of high-level radioactive waste at the
6 Nevada Test Site;

7 (5) the new revelation of contamination at the
8 Nevada Test Site must be addressed before storage
9 can be considered; and

10 (6) the National Academy of Sciences is a pri-
11 vate, nonprofit organization consisting of scholars
12 engaged in scientific and engineering research.

13 **SEC. 2. STUDY.**

14 The Secretary of Energy shall enter into a contract
15 with the National Academy of Sciences to study—

16 (1) the extent to which and the manner in
17 which plutonium has migrated from each test loca-
18 tion at the Nevada Test Site;

19 (2) the extent to which plutonium may be ex-
20 pected to migrate in the future; and

21 (3) the potential for current and future human
22 exposure and possible health risks to communities.

23 The study should consider all future potential routes of
24 exposure, such as use of contaminated groundwater as
25 drinking water. The study should consider potential future

1 trends in population growth over the next 1,000 years in
2 the vicinity of the Nevada Test Site. The results of such
3 study shall be transmitted to the Congress not later than
4 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act.

